



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appellant: Sean Dominic Taylor
Assignee: At Road, Inc.
Title: Targeted Impending Arrival Notification of a Wirelessly Connected Location Device
Serial No.: 09/696,722 Filing Date: October 24, 2000
Examiner: Nguyen, Hung T. Group Art Unit: 2636
Docket No.: M-8835 US

San Jose, California
January 14, 2005

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR § 41.37

Dear Sir:

Appellant submits this Appeal Brief in support of the Notice of Appeal filed in this case on August 16, 2004, and received by the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office on August 19, 2004. An accompanying petition requests a three-month extension of time, extending the time allowed for filing this appeal brief to January 19, 2005. The accompanying transmittal letter authorizes the Commissioner for Patents to deduct from the undersigned Attorney's deposit account the required fees for filing this Appeal Brief.

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I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest is Assignee At Road, Inc.

II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no appeals or interferences known to Appellant, Appellant's legal representative, or the Assignee which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the decision by the Board of Patent Appeals in the pending appeal.

III. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 3-23 are pending, rejected, and appealed.

IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

The last amendment made to the claims was submitted in an Amendment filed on August 22, 2003. A Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (paper no. 21) was mailed on September 15, 2003, indicating that the August 22, 2003, Amendment failed to meet with requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, and giving Applicant until October 15, 2003, to supply a corrected amendment. On October 2, 2003, Applicant submitted a Response to Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment resubmitting the claim amendments filed with the August 22, 2003, Amendment.

On November 3, 2003, the Examiner issued a Non-Final Office Action in which amended Claims 1 and 3-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103. On March 3, 2004, a

Response to Office Action was filed in which no claim amendments were made. On May 15, 2004, a Final Office Action was mailed in which Claims 1 and 3-23 were finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103. In response, the Appellant filed a Notice of Appeal on August 16, 2004. Therefore, for the purposes of this Appeal, all amendments to the claims stand entered in the application.

V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

As described by the specification on page 2, lines 21-30, a mobile unit (shown in Fig. 2 as rover 210) identifies a destination or travel threshold, periodically checks the mobile unit's location relative to the destination or threshold, and sends an alert to a service center (shown in Fig. 2 as service center 240) upon nearing the destination or crossing the threshold. The service center relays the alert to one or more designated parties. Accordingly, the service center can alert a designated party when the mobile unit nears a destination or when the mobile unit leaves an alert area surrounding a location. The alerts can be relayed via an automated telephone message, a pager message, an e-mail message, or any other communication means. The alerts can be used for deliveries by directing an alert to a customer expecting a delivery or to a site expecting a vehicle for loading or unloading.

Independent Claim 1 relates to an alert generating method in which a server is provided on a wide area network (shown in Fig. 2 as Internet 150) accessible by a user to specify conditions for an alert and an action to be carried out when the conditions for the alert are met. In accordance with this method, the conditions for the alert are provided to the mobile unit over a wireless network service connection (shown in Fig. 2 as wireless network

service connection 130) which links the mobile unit and a service center over a wide area network (see, e.g., page 5, line 20, to page 6, line 2). As described on page 5, lines 10-14, the mobile unit's position may be monitored using, e.g., a communications package such as the iLM 2000 available from @Road, Inc., which includes a GPS receiver 212, a control circuit 214, and a wireless device 216. GPS receiver 212 when activated interprets signals from GPS satellites 120 to identify the position and velocity of the rover 110.

The service center is provided a signal indicating that the conditions for the alert are satisfied. In the embodiment described on page 3, lines 26-31, the mobile unit includes a control circuit which activates a wireless device to send an alert signal if the mobile unit has satisfied the alert condition. In the example described on page 6, lines 14-19, the alert condition typically includes threshold information, which is typically a distance or radius that defines an alert area around the destination. The alert condition may additionally include fields indicating circumstances for the alert. Typical circumstances surrounding an alert include whether the alert should be sent at all, a direction of traversal of the threshold that triggers an alert, an order of the destinations, and any time limitations on the alert.

The designated location is alerted by carrying out the specified action from the service center upon receiving the signal. In the example described on page 9, lines 9-12, the service center 240 activates alerting device 250 to send the alert to designated location 270. Alerting device 250 is a communication device such as an automated telephone messaging system or an automated e-mail system. As described on page 9, lines 12-14, the alerted party can be alerted in a variety of ways, including but no limited to by e-mail, paging message, text

message to a cellular phone, or a telephone call with a synthesized speech or recorded message.

Independent Claim 14 relates to a delivery method comprising creating a list of destinations for deliveries at a service center, the list including a threshold distance for one or more destinations for which an alert should be generated (see, e.g., page 6, lines 3-19). In accordance with this method, a mechanism accessible over a wide area network for users related to the destinations is provided to specify actions to be carried out when the alert is generated (see, e.g., page 6, line 27, to page 7, line 1). A portion of the list of destinations is downloaded to a mobile unit installed in a delivery vehicle, the downloading being effectuated over a wireless network connection which links the mobile unit to the service center over a wide area network (see, e.g., page 5, lines 20-26; page 7, lines 4-6). A destination is selected from the list as a next destination for a delivery vehicle (see, e.g., page 7, line 27, to page 8, line 6). The distance between the delivery vehicle and the selected destination is monitored (see, e.g., page 8, lines 11-31). The alert from the delivery vehicle is generated when the distance is less than a threshold distance and is received at the service center (see, e.g., page 8, line 31, to page 9, line 2). The specified action is carried out from the service center to the selected destination in response to the alert received at the service center (see, e.g., page 9, lines 2-14).

Independent Claim 16 relates to a mobile unit comprising a location system (see, e.g., page 3, line 31, to page 4, line 1), a wireless device, and a control circuit. The wireless device links the mobile unit with a service center over a wireless network connection of a wide area network (see, e.g., page 5, line 20, to page 6, line 2). The control circuit includes a user

interface (see, e.g., page 5, lines 14-19), wherein (1) the control circuit receives a destination list from the service center over the wireless connection (see, e.g., page 6, lines 4-8), (2) the user interface allows a user to edit the destination list received and to select a current destination from the destination list (see, e.g., page 7, line 27, to page 8, line 9), and (3) the control circuit sends a message to inform the service center of the current destination, automatically activates the location system to determine a current location of the mobile unit, determines whether the mobile unit has crossed a threshold relating to the current destination, and activates the wireless device to send an alert signal if the mobile unit has crossed the threshold (see, e.g., page 8, line 16, to page 9, line 3).

Independent Claim 22 relates to a system comprising a data connection to a wide area network (shown in Fig. 2 as Internet 150), an alerting device (shown in Fig. 2 as alerting device 250 and described on page 9, lines 9-14), and a service center (shown in Fig. 2 as service center 240). The service center is connected to the data connection to enable receipt of messages from a mobile unit over a wireless network connection and connected to the alerting device to enable the service center to activate the alerting device and send alerts, the service center maintaining contact information for the mobile unit, wherein the service center comprises a server that permits access to the service center over the wide area network for setting the designated location to which the alerting device sends the alert and the conditions for the alert (see, e.g., page 6, line 23, to page 7, line 1). In response to a signal from the mobile unit, the service center activates the alerting device to send an alert to a designated location identified in the contact information (see, e.g., page 9, lines 1-14).

VI. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

In a May 17, 2004, Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected pending Claims 1 and 3-23.

Claims 16-17 and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,124,810 ("Segal") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,444,444 ("Ross").

Claims 1, 3-5, 8-15, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segal in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,724,243 ("Westerlage") further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,668,543 ("Jones").

Claims 6-7, 18, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segal in view of Westerlage further in view of Jones and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,959,577 ("Fan").

VII. ARGUMENT

1. Rejection of Claims 16-17 and 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,124,810 ("Segal") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,444,444 ("Ross")

On pages 2-3 of the May 17, 2004, Final Office Action, the Examiner states, in part:

Segal fails to specifically mention the user interface allows a user / operator to edit the destination list received from the control circuit.

For a better service also to save time and energy because of heavy traffic problem or weather conditions the vehicle operator may modify the destination list received as load assignments.

Furthermore, Ross teaches a control circuit (1) including a user interface / keyboard which allows a user to edit the destination list received

can be utilized in a mobile vehicle or carrier equipped with a satellite receiver, a controller and a communicator. . . .

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art was made to employ the teaching of Ross in the system of Segal for allowing a vehicle operator a capability to adjust and select the delivery schedule in a manner way.

In response to the Appellant's Remarks in the March 3, 2004, Response to Office Action, the

Examiner states, in part:

A) The examiner is NOT in error to use the Ross system which contains a control circuit (1) including a user interface / keyboard (12) which allows a user to edit the destination list received can be utilized in a mobile vehicle or carrier is equipped with a satellite receiver, a controller and a communicator [figs. 2-3, col. 5, lines 33-45].

Claim 16 recites, in part:

a control circuit including a user interface, wherein (1) the control circuit receives a destination list from the service center over the wireless connection, (2) the user interface allows a user to edit the destination list received and to select a current destination from the destination list, and (3) the control circuit sends a message to inform the service center of the current destination, automatically activates the location system to determine a current location of the mobile unit, determines whether the mobile unit has crossed a threshold relating to the current destination, and activates the wireless device to send an alert signal if the mobile unit has crossed the threshold. (Emphasis added.)

The Examiner bears the initial burden of factually supporting any *prima facie* conclusions of obviousness. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when

combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. MPEP §2142.

Appellant respectfully submits that the Examiner has failed to meet the first and third basic criteria for establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness. First, neither Segal nor Ross disclose or suggest allowing a user to select or vary the next destination in sequence.

Appellant respectfully submits that the Examiner is in error and has mischaracterized Ross's teachings – the passages of Ross cited by the Examiner (Figs. 2-3 and col. 5, lines 33-45) do not teach or suggest an ability to “allow a user to edit the destination list.” For example, in its entirety, col. 5, lines 33-45, of Ross states:

The carrier enters the delivery information to the controller 10 after one or more packages at the location have been delivered to the recipient. The carrier enters through the keyboard 12 the information needed to update the route schedule and to show that delivery has been completed for particular items. Upon receiving information that delivery of a particular package has been completed, the controller 10 begins the analysis process over again 42 by receiving positioning signals. This method of tracking deliveries, analyzing locations and estimated times of delivery, and notifying recipients of pending delivery continues for the remaining schedule of deliveries. (Emphasis added.)¹

Accordingly, Ross shows a user interface (keyboard 12), but merely describes that the user interface is used “to update the route schedule and to show that delivery has been completed for particular items.” (Ross, col. 5, lines 36-38.) This fails to disclose or suggest a user

¹ Page 8 of the March 3, 2004, Response to Office Action, includes an inadvertent error in quotation. The quotation attributed to col. 5, lines 33-45 of Ross was in fact col. 5, lines 33-45 of Segal. Appellant's attorney apologizes for the inadvertent error, but submits that the excerpt correctly quoted from Ross still does not support the Examiner's position.

interface which “allows a user to edit the destination list received and to select a current destination from the destination list” (emphasis added), as recited in Claim 16.

In fact, Ross teaches away from the claimed user interface by teaching that the next destination is detected by comparing the current location against all the possible destinations in sequence:

If deliveries remain on the schedule, the controller 10 compares the location of the delivery vehicle to the delivery location for each package to be delivered in sequence. The controller 10 first accesses the data storage device 16 to determine if the recipient of that particular delivery has already been notified 50 of the pending delivery of the item. If the recipient has already been notified of delivery, the controller 10 considers the next delivery in the sequence of deliveries.

Otherwise, the controller 10 compares 52 the location of the delivery vehicle to the delivery location. The controller 10 then determines an estimated time of arrival at that delivery location. . . . If the period 54 for the estimated time of arrival is greater than a predetermined interval, the controller 10 repeats 46 the analysis for the next delivery in the sequence of deliveries. (Ross, col. 4, lines 50-67.)

If the period before the estimated time of arrival at the bus stop is greater than a predetermine interval, the controller 10 repeats the analysis for the next bus stop in the sequence in the route. (Ross, col. 6, lines 56-59.)

As explained in Applicant’s Specification on page 7, line 30, to page 8, line 9, by allowing the user of the mobile unit to select the next destination, local traffic conditions or other conditions which cannot be anticipated from the service center can be accommodated. In addition, because the current destination is confirmed with the service center by means of a message, an updated destination list can be made available by the service center through a server accessible over a wide area network.

Accordingly, the proposed combination of Segal and Ross fails to teach or suggest all the limitations of Claim 16. Therefore, the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claim 16.

In addition, Appellant respectfully submits that the Examiner has further failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness by failing to show some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. As described in the MPEP:

The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990)

* * *

If proposed modification would render the prior art invention being modified unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, then there is no suggestion or motivation to make the proposed modification. *In re Gordon*, 733 F.2d 900, 221 USPQ 1125 (Fed. Cir. 1984)

(MPEP § 2143.01)

It is improper to combine references where the references teach away from their combination. *In re Grasselli*, 713 F.2d 731, 743, 218 USPQ 769, 779 (Fed. Cir. 1983)

(MPEP § 2145)

As described in Appellant's August 22, 2003, Amendment and March 3, 2004, Response to Office Action, Segal teaches away from the Examiner's proposed modification of providing the system of Segal with a user interface which "allows a user to edit the

destination list received and to select a current destination from the destination list” (emphasis added), as recited in Claim 16.

In contrast with Claim 16, Segal teaches to minimize or completely eliminate driver intervention with respect to handling arrival at and departure from planned or unplanned destinations, which teaches away from allowing a driver to modify the destination list:

The present invention is an apparatus and method for determination the status of a vehicle in transit. In particular, the present invention determines if a vehicle has arrived or departed from a planned or an unplanned stop, while minimizing or eliminating the need for driver intervention. (Segal, col. 2, lines 41-47)

As shown above, Segal teaches away from the Examiner’s proposed modification, thereby making the Examiner’s proposed combination improper. Accordingly, the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claim 16 and Claims 17 and 19-21, which depend from Claim 16.

2. Rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 8-15, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segal in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,724,243 (“Westerlage”) further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,668,543 (“Jones”)

Claims 1, 3-5, 8-15, and 22 are not made obvious by Segal, Westerlage, and Jones

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 3-5, 8-15, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segal in view of Westerlage further in view of Jones. On page 14 of the May 17, 2004, Final Office Action, the Examiner states, in part:

Segal fails to specifically disclose a server is used on a wide area network and alerting a designated location by carry out the specified action from the service center upon receiving the signal.

Westerlage teaches a system (10) for determining an expected time of arrival of a vehicle (40) equipped with a mobile unit (42) includes a dispatch (20) along with a central controller (72) having a database memory (74) for storing and monitoring the vehicle position and in response to the vehicle position [fig. 6, col. 13, lines 3-13].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to have the teaching of Westerlage in the system of Segal to provide an efficient and orderly way to manage the storage & retrieval / delivery of the stored information to intended users.

The combination of Segal and Westerlage is still missing alerting a designated location by carry out the specified action from the service center upon receiving the signal.

For a business to track deliveries, the business's customers who may be interested in knowing when a delivery will arrive by alerting them through a telephone, pager message, an e-mail message or any other communication means.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest the following step recited in Claim 1:

providing a server on a wide area network accessible by a user to specify conditions for an alert and an action to be carried out when the conditions for the alert are met, the conditions referencing a position of a mobile unit

As explained in Applicant's Specification, at page 6, lines 24-29, allowing a user to manage the destination list over a wide area network (e.g., the Internet), alert conditions and contact information in a destination list can be modified by one or more users even after a rover is en route. Neither these above-quoted limitations, nor their attendant benefits, are disclosed or suggested by Segal, Westerlage or Jones.

The Examiner cited Segal's Figs. 1-4, col. 3, line 65 to col. 4, line 24 and col. 9, lines 44-46 as his support for contending that Segal teaches "providing a wide area network (106) that allows a user to specify conditions for an alert and action to be carried out when the conditions for the alert are met, the conditions referencing a position of a mobile unit (108)."

However, contrary to this assertion by the Examiner, Applicant does not find such a teaching disclosed in any of the portions of Segal that the Examiner cited. Fig. 1 shows a satellite communication system 100. Fig. 2 shows the components used for automatically determining vehicle arrivals and departures from planned and unplanned stops. Fig. 3 is a flow chart detailing the steps that are performed to determine if a vehicle has arrived at a planned stop. Fig. 4 is a flow diagram illustrating the steps that are performed to determine if a vehicle has departed from a planned stop. At Segal's col. 3, line 65 to col. 4, line 24, reference numeral 106 merely refers to a communication satellite. Col. 9, lines 44-46, recite that the processor 206 "determine[s] the approximate differential distance between the present vehicle position and the planned stop." User access to the wide area network to specify the alert conditions is not taught, however.

Neither Westerlage nor Jones cure the deficiencies of Segal. Consequently, the combined teachings of Segal, Westerlage and Jones do not support the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claim 1 and Claims 3-5 and 8-13, which depend from Claim 1.

Claim 14 recites, in part:

providing a mechanism accessible over a wide area network for users related to the destinations to specify actions to be carried out when the alert is generated

For at least the reasons described above with respect to Claim 1, the cited references do not support the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claim 14 and dependent Claim 15.

Claim 22 recites, in part:

a service center connected to the data connection to enable receipt of messages from a mobile unit over a wireless network connection and connected to the alerting device to enable the service center to activate the alerting device and send alerts, the service center maintaining contact information for the mobile unit, wherein the service center comprises a server that permits access to the service center over the wide area network for setting the designated location to which the alerting device sends the alert and the conditions for the alert, and wherein

For at least the reasons described above with respect to Claim 1, the cited references do not support the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claim 22.

Claim 5 is not made obvious by Segal, Westerlage, and Jones

Claim 5 recites:

The method of claim 1, wherein the specified action comprises sending e-mail to the designated location.

With respect to Claim 5, the Examiner states:

C) Segal discloses the alerting signal or specified action wherein the signal from the mobile unit via wireless network service system as cellular, PCS or other GMS terrestrial base system. Those skilled in the art will recognize that the PCS or other GMS terrestrial base system may comprise an e-mail or other communication means as desired to the designated location [figs. 1-2, col. 3, lines 55-64 and col. 4, lines 6-12]. (Emphasis added.)

The Examiner does not dispute that Segal's col. 3, lines 55-64, does not teach or suggest the limitations of Claim 5. The Examiner merely states without support that "those skilled in the art will recognize that the PCS or other GMS terrestrial base system may comprise an e-mail or other communication means as desired to the designated location."

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's rejection of Claim 5 is based merely

on impermissible hindsight reconstruction, and for this additional reason, the Examiner's rejection of Claim 5 is unsupported by the cited references.

Claim 13 is not made obvious by Segal, Westerlage, and Jones

Claim 13 recites:

13. The method of claim 12, wherein an operator of the mobile unit selects the selected destination when the mobile unit is proceeding directly to the selected destination.

Similar with Claim 16, none of the cited references disclose or suggest a method in which an operator of the mobile unit selects the selected destination when the mobile unit is proceeding directly to the selected destination. Accordingly, for this additional reason, the Examiner's rejection of Claim 13 is unsupported by the cited references.

3. Rejection of Claims 6-7, 18, and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segal in view of Westerlage further in view of Jones and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,959,577 ("Fan")

As described above, the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claim 1. Fan does not cure deficiencies of Segal, Westerlage, and Jones with respect to Claim 1. Accordingly, the combination of Segal, Westerlage, Jones, and Fan fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claims 6-7, which depend from Claim 1.

The Examiner has also failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claim 16. Fan does not cure deficiencies of the references cited against Claim 16. Accordingly, the combination of Segal, Westerlage, Jones, and Fan fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claim 18, which depends from Claim 16.

The Examiner has also failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claim 22. Fan does not cure deficiencies of the references cited against Claim 22. Accordingly, the combination of Segal, Westerlage, Jones, and Fan fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claim 23, which depends from Claim 22.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Appellant respectfully submits that Claims 1 and 3-23 are allowable the cited references. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences to reverse the Examiner's rejections of Claims 1 and 3-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

If the Examiner or the Board have any questions regarding the above, they are respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned Attorney for Appellant at 408-392-9250.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Appeal Brief – Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on January 14, 2005.

H. Matsubayashi 1/14/05
Attorney for Applicant(s) Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,

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CLAIMS APPENDIX

Pending Claims 1 and 3-23 recite:

1. (Previously presented) An alert generating method, comprising:

providing a server on a wide area network accessible by a user to specify conditions for an alert and an action to be carried out when the conditions for the alert are met, the conditions referencing a position of a mobile unit;

providing to the mobile unit over a wireless network service connection the conditions for the alert, the wireless network service connection linking the mobile unit and a service center over the wide area network;

monitoring in the mobile unit the mobile unit's position;

providing the service center a signal indicating that the conditions for the alert are satisfied; and

alerting a designated location by carrying out the specified action from the service center upon receiving the signal.

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the signal from the mobile unit is sent via the wireless network service connection.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the specified action comprises telephoning the designated location.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the specified action comprises sending e-mail to the designated location.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing the conditions for the alert comprises downloading information from the service center to the mobile unit.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 6, further comprising downloading a destination list, including information that identifies the conditions for the alert, to the mobile unit from a web site corresponding to the service center.

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the conditions identify an area around a destination for the mobile unit.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the conditions indicate that the alert should be generated when the mobile unit enters the area around the destination.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the conditions indicate that the alert should be generated when the mobile unit leaves the area around the destination.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the area around the destination is provided to the mobile unit as a location and a threshold radius that respectively correspond to a center and a radius of the area surrounding the destination.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting a destination for the mobile unit, wherein the conditions for the alert require that the selected destination be a destination that is identified in the conditions.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein an operator of the mobile unit selects the selected destination when the mobile unit is proceeding directly to the selected destination.

14. (Previously presented) A delivery method comprising:

creating a list of destinations for deliveries at a service center, the list including a threshold distance for one or more destinations for which an alert should be generated;

providing a mechanism accessible over a wide area network for users related to the destinations to specify actions to be carried out when the alert is generated;

downloading a portion of the list of destinations to a mobile unit installed in a delivery vehicle, the downloading being effectuated over a wireless network connection which links the mobile unit to the service center over a wide area network;

selecting a destination from the list as a next destination for a delivery vehicle;

monitoring distance between the delivery vehicle and the selected destination;

generating the alert from the delivery vehicle when the distance is less than a threshold distance;

receiving the alert at the service center; and

carrying out the specified action from the service center to the selected destination in response to the alert received at the service center.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein comprises sending a message from the delivery vehicle to the service center, the message including a tag identifying the destination.

16. (Previously presented) A mobile unit comprising:

a location system;

a wireless device linking the mobile unit with a service center over a wireless network connection of a wide area network; and

a control circuit including a user interface, wherein (1) the control circuit receives a destination list from the service center over the wireless connection, (2) the user interface allows a user to edit the destination list received and to select a current destination from the destination list, and (3) the control circuit sends a message to inform the service center of the current destination, automatically activates the location system to determine a current location of the mobile unit, determines whether the mobile unit has crossed a threshold relating to the current destination, and activates the wireless device to send an alert signal if the mobile unit has crossed the threshold.

17. (Original) The mobile unit of claim 16, wherein the location system is a GPS receiver.

18. (Original) The mobile unit of claim 16, wherein the wireless device is a wireless modem.

19. (Original) The mobile unit of claim 16, wherein the wireless device is an attached data-capable cellular telephone.

20. (Original) The mobile unit of claim 16, wherein the control circuit determines whether the mobile unit has crossed the threshold by determining whether the current location of the mobile unit is within an alert area.

21. (Original) The mobile unit of claim 20, wherein the control circuit calculates a distance between the current location and a central point in the alert area and determines whether the distance is less than a threshold distance associated with the alert area.

22. (Previously presented) A system comprising:

a data connection to a wide area network;

an alerting device; and

a service center connected to the data connection to enable receipt of messages from a mobile unit over a wireless network connection and connected to the alerting device to enable the service center to activate the alerting device and send alerts, the service center maintaining contact information for the mobile unit, wherein the service center comprises a server that permits access to the service center over the wide area network for setting the designated location to which the alerting device sends the alert and the conditions for the alert, and wherein

in response to a signal from the mobile unit, the service center activates the alerting device to send an alert to a designated location identified in the contact information.

23. (Previously presented) The system of claim 22, wherein the wide area network includes the internet, and wherein the server is accessed by a web browser.

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